

Current Watershed Planning Efforts San Juan River, New Mexico San Juan Watershed Group



Scott Clove
Ute Mountain Ute Tribe
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Prepared pursuant to the Clean Water Act and Unified Assessment of
New Mexico watersheds

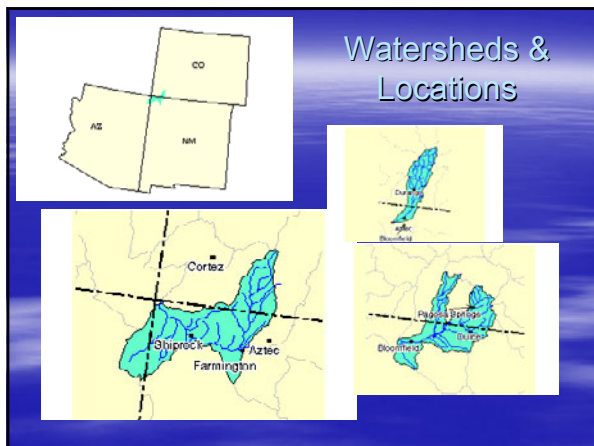
San Juan Basin Watershed Management Plan

January 2005



San Juan Basin in New Mexico





Land Management and Land Use Perspective

Tables 1 through 5 summarize the land management jurisdictions within each watershed.

Surface Management	Acres
BLM	105,631
USFS	24,992
USFS	120,812
USFWS	319
Nevada Nation	153,353
Navajo Nation	225,820
Private	187,639
State	40,140
State Game and Fish	4,620
Total	1,163,074

Surface Management	Acres
BLM	434,872
USFS	602
USFS	431,115
Navajo Nation	430,080
Private	124,763
State	40,019
Total	1,095,219

Surface Management	Acres
BLM	78,415
USFS	30
Private	80,276
State	12,002
Total	168,887

Surface Management	Acres
BLM	80,912
USFS	810
Nevada Nation	509,204
Navajo Nation	120,812
Private	80,443
State	14,412
Total	801,153

Surface Management	Acres
BLM	318,420
USFS	1,202
Navajo Nation	2,384,244
USFS	35,128
Private	75,264
State	105,972
Total	2,920,112

History of Watershed Group

- State of NM was sued for not implementing TMDL's on specific waters identified on their 303(d) list of impaired waters
- Consent Decree in Settlement outlined plan for watershed activities in each watershed, including the San Juan River
- State of NM called a Preliminary, Comprehensive list of Stakeholders

A photograph of a man wearing a brown jacket, a hat, and sunglasses, standing in a room. He is holding a white box. On the wall behind him is a large map of the state of New Mexico.

San Juan Watershed Group

■ Loose Organization of Diverse San Juan River Stakeholders

- State Regulators and NPS Program Administrators (NM)
- Tribal Water Quality Administrators (Ute Mountain, Navajo, Jicarilla Apache)
- Public Land Managers (BLM/State of NM)
- Industry Representatives (2 Coal-fired power plants, oil & gas)
- Local Water Commission
- Irrigation/Ditch Companies
- Farmers/Ranchers
- Local Individuals
- Non-for-Profit Organizations
- Upstream/Downstream Entities (State of CO, SJRIP)
- **Watershed Group Facilitator (paid through State of NM 319 \$)**

August 2001 was the first meeting First step was to figure out *Mission and Goals*

■ **MISSION:** "to protect current and future uses of surface waters in the San Juan watershed through identification of water quality concerns and by seeking solutions for problems defined"

■ **GOALS**

- Review water quality standards, identify problem parameters, and assist the New Mexico Environment Department, as needed, in developing total maximum daily loads.
- Encourage a balanced approach for bringing problem parameters into compliance; look for implementing best management practices to keep those problems from worsening.
- Develop a comprehensive monitoring strategy.
- Focus on surface water concerns and connected shallow aquifers.

MISSION AND GOALS TOOK A FEW MEETINGS = 3-4 MONTHS

What are Main Regulatory Issues? (the ones that brought on the lawsuits)

- Fecal Coliform (*E. Coli*)
- Sedimentation/Stream Bottom Deposits (maybe just a "windshield survey" assessment from past years monitoring)
- Nutrient Enrichment in Tributaries- Animas and La Plata Rivers (high N&P, low Oxygen)
- Acute Toxicity (likely from ammonia in sediment)
- Selenium
- Mercury in Fish Tissue- all lakes, reservoirs and all three stream segments of the San Juan River in New Mexico

Other Issues in the Watershed

- Hydromodification– Navajo Dam, Irrigation Ditches and Canals
- Urban/Residential Modifications– Rip Rap =Non-Functioning Stream Morphology

Natural vs. Man-Induced Debate
(especially with sedimentation)

Other Issues in the Watershed

- Endangered Species:
Colorado
Pikeminnow,
Razorback
Sucker
- SJRIP



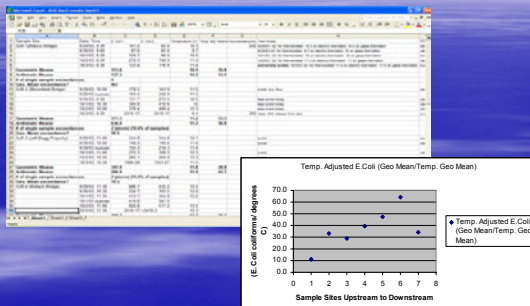
Invasive Riparian Species Russian Olive, Tamarisk



Fecal Coliform/ E. Coli

- Has been a major focus of efforts for monitoring and understanding of watershed
- 2001/2002 data from State
- 2003 study
- 2004 float study (upper ½)
- 2005 float study (lower half)
- Targeted Sub-Watershed, Stephens Arroyo in 2006

Data Analysis



Looks Good, Not Really



Fecal Coliform/ E. Coli



Fecal Coliform/ E. Coli

- A Contractor has been hired by the SJWG to continue the bacteria source tracking
- Stephens Arroyo Study found septic system(s), wildlife and grazing to be the likely sources
- Stephens Arroyo Restoration Activities Likely (landowner buy-in needed, outreach to begin soon)
- Another sub-watershed may be next, including Ute Mtn. Tribal Lands



Sedimentation/Stream Bottom Deposits- Debatable, but Improvable



National Sediment Lab Consulted

- Pre-work Presentation to SJWG
- Sampling and analysis
- Post-work Presentation
- Still Listed
- Still Debatable
- Agree to Disagree



Nutrient Enrichment

- 2002 Drought Effects cause debate
- Animas River Nutrient Work Group Forms, begins monitoring
- Ongoing
- Many Partners:
2 States, 2 Tribes, 1 non-profit, SJWG, volunteers, college program



Acute Toxicity



Mercury– Lots of Debate about Sources
Mines, Dams, Power Plants and Oil and Gas
Industry



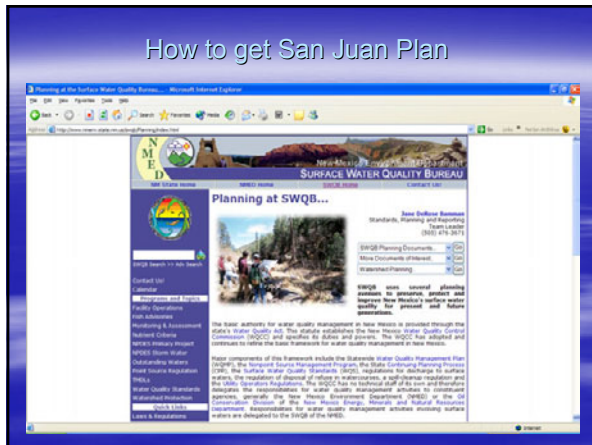
Rip Rap-- Do You Think They Got A Permit?



Back to the Watershed Management Plan

- Guts:
 - History
 - Organization (SJWG)
 - Monitoring (all basin-wide usable data)
 - Water Quality Problems
 - Protection and Restoration Approaches
 - FUNDING!!!
 - Implementation Schedule
 - THIS IS A LIVING DOCUMENT

How to get San Juan Plan



How to get San Juan Plan

- <http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/swqb/wps/WRAS/SanJuanBasinWatershedPlan01-11-05.pdf>
- Call Scott 970-564-5431
- Get one here– paper or electronic

Lessons Learned in SJWG

- Patience and Understanding
 - Everyone is busy with a lot of other stuff
- Diverse Interest and Objectives
- Common Goals
 - Clean Water for *various purposes*

Thanks for listening